



CATHOLIC CONVERSATIONS ON THE SCRIPTURES

Archdiocese of Miami – Office of Lay Ministry

May 1, 2016 Sixth Sunday of Easter

Gospel reading John 14:23-29 *[To be read aloud]*

Jesus said to his disciples: “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me. “I have told you this while I am with you.

The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me tell you, ‘I am going away and I will come back to you.’ If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe.

Brief commentary:

As we near the feasts of the Ascension of the Lord and Pentecost the readings today highlight the universality of God’s plan realized in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and expanded through the mission of his Church, and the gifts of God in Christ. The gospel text enumerates the many divine gifts that we are graced with in Christ: a love that lives in obedience to Jesus’ word, the indwelling of the Father and the Son, Christ’s own peace (so different from the world’s concept of peace), fortitude in place of fear, and a new Advocate who would ‘teach, remind and guide’ the Church and her members in their life and mission.

Jesus describes who his followers are: “Whoever loves me [and] keeps my word...” To be Christian means believing in, loving, and following Jesus Christ. These aspects are essentially interrelated. Christians are people who do this not based on their own strength alone, but by responding to the grace, the living Spirit, of God living and working in their hearts, lives and communities.

Today’s reading offers significant messages:

- Throughout the Easter season we are called to remember the earliest communities that paved a way for the Church to remain true to her Jewish roots and open to the new universal reality revealed and established by Jesus Christ.
- Christian identity, life and mission have their source in Someone, Jesus Christ. Only united to Jesus, like branches to the Vine, can Christians live, thrive and bear fruit.
- Being Christian essentially involves a response to God’s grace in Christ lived in faith, love and fidelity to Christ’s gospel.

For our shared or personal reflection:

After a brief pause for silent reflection share your answers, ideas or feelings.

- What are the challenges that the Church faces today, and how is she responding to these?
- How have I experienced the light of the risen Paschal Lamb this Easter? How have I reflected his light?
- Reflect with this prayer: “O dear Lord, three things I pray: to see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, follow thee more nearly, day by day.”

Suggested readings: Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraphs 687-701